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EMPLOYMENT AND UNEMPLOYMENT.

The latest available statistics, from various sources, which offer some indication of the movement of Employment and Unemployment throughout Australia, have been issued by the Commonwealth Statistician (Mr. E.T. McPhee).

I. INDEX OF EMPLOYMENT.

In view of the smallness of the proportion of wage earners covered by the trade union returns as to unemployment, and of doubts as to whether they were indicative of the degree of unemployment among all wage earners, it was decided at the Premiers' Conference in June, 1933, that State Statisticians should co-operate with the Commonwealth Statistician in compiling an Index of Employment by using data from the Census of 30th June, 1933, as the starting point.

The report of the Conference referred to the matter in the following terms:-

"The Commonwealth called attention to the need for a more reliable system of measuring unemployment in Australia. The present figures were based on returns from trade unions which cover only 20% of the total employment. The degree of reliance to be placed upon the figures was uncertain. A direct quarterly census of unemployment was estimated to cost £100,000 per annum. Failing a good direct measure of unemployment, the best resource was a measure based on information obtained from employers and other sources."

The work of collecting adequate sample returns of employment was undertaken by the State Statisticians, and it is possible now to make available progress results for most of the States covering sections of employment and indexes of employment covering all employment in New South Wales and Queensland.

While it may not be possible to secure complete indexes of employment for all States, it is hoped that ultimately all States will collect representative returns for all the major fields of employment on a sufficiently uniform basis to permit of the production of a reliable monthly index of employment.

Indexes of employment in factories and in retail shops are shown below for all States.

ANNUAL INDEX OF FACTORY EMPLOYMENT.

Base Year 1928-29 = 100.

Number of Employees in 1928-29	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	TOTAL
	180,806	156,568	45,031	36,807	20,804	10,466	450,482
1925-26	94	95	106(a)	106	99	97	97
1926-27	99	101(a)	98	112(a)	93	101	100(a)
1927-28	99	100	99	106	98	106(a)	100
1928-29	100(a)	100	100	100	100(a)	100	100
1929-30	90	96	95	87	94	103	93
1930-31	71	80	84	65	70	84	75
1931-32	70	82	80	65	64	86	75
1932-33	77	92	83	72	71	88	82
1933-34	85	100	89	80	78	93	90
1934-35	93(b)	108(b)	97(b)	91	86(b)	(c)	(c)

(a) Year of maximum employment.

(b) Preliminary figures subject to revision.

(c) Not available.

/These

These indexes show the course of factory employment in the respective States from 1925-26, though 1928-29 has been taken as the base year. The figures show the progress of the depression and the subsequent recovery. So far as actual numbers are concerned, without regard to any increase in the population, there is evidence that the pre-depression level of factory employment has been reached in Victoria, Queensland, and South Australia, while New South Wales stands at 98 per cent. and Western Australia at 91 per cent. of the 1928-29 figure which was the maximum in both cases. Wage earners dependent on factory employment represent approximately 20 per cent. of total persons dependent on employment in the Commonwealth. The relative proportions and the rates of increase in relation to total employment vary as between States. Since 1928-29 population has increased on the average by about 5 per cent.

The course of factory employment in each of the five States for which information is available is given below, month by month, during the year ended June, 1935, and for the three months ended September, 1935.

MONTHLY INDEX OF FACTORY EMPLOYMENT - 1934-35.

(Base: Average for Year 1928-29 = 100).

Month	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia
1934 - July ..	88	104	92	84	77
August ..	88	105	98	86	80
September	88	105	100	86	83
October ..	92	107	103	88	85
November	94	109	101	87	84
December	96	108	98	89	85
1935 - January ..	91	106	87	90	85
February	94	110	92	88	88
March ..	96	112	97	92	89
April ..	96	111	99	97	90
May ..	97	109	100	101	90
June ..	97	109	100	102	90
July ..	96	109	102	100	87
August ..	97	X	105	98	88
September	98		105	102	91

✓ Preliminary. Based on sample factories. Subject to revision when complete returns are available.

X Later details not yet available.

Endeavour is being made to complete a corresponding index for Tasmania. When this is available, a Commonwealth index of factory employment will be prepared.

MONTHLY INDEX

MONTHLY INDEX OF EMPLOYMENT IN RETAIL STORES.

(Base: July, 1933 = 100)

Month	New South Wales	Victoria	Queensland	South Australia	Western Australia	Tasmania	SIX STATES
1933 - July	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
August	97	99	99	102	93	101	98
September	99	101	97	102	93	98	99
October	99	103	97	99	93	109	100
November	102	111	100	100	96	108	104
December	113	121	110	108	106	115	114
1934 - January	102	109	100	103	108	109	105
February	104	108	99	102	99	105	104
March	104	109	100	102	98	107	104
April	103	108	100	103	100	105	104
May	105	108	102	105	101	105	105
June	105	109	103	104	100	105	106
July	108	109	104	106	104	107	107
August	105	109	103	102	102	105	105
September	107	110	103	103	100	106	107
October	108	115 Ø	104	108	104	104	109
November	110	122 Ø	105	107	104	107	112
December	123	131 Ø	116	118	119	119	124
1935 - January	109	117 Ø	106	108	109	110	111
February	112	117 Ø	106	107	103	108	112
March	109	118 Ø	105	107	105	107	111
April	111	117 Ø	105	108	103	107	111
May	112	121 Ø	106	109	106	107	113
June	112	123 Ø	105	111	107	106	114
July	116	120	107	107	111	109	115
August	113	X	108	109	105	108	X
September	113		104	113	106	107	
October	115		X	X	X	X	

Ø The relatively high rate of employment in these months coincides with the Centenary celebrations.

X Later figures not available.

The number of establishments in respect of which returns are obtained are - New South Wales, 533; Victoria, 103; Queensland, 120; South Australia, 35; Western Australia (not stated); Tasmania, 14. No adjustment has been made in the indexes on account of increased population.

INDEXES OF EMPLOYMENT IN NEW SOUTH WALES AND QUEENSLAND.

Working from the basis of the results of the Census of 30th June, 1933, and from compilations made from returns of employers in remitting wages tax, and returns collected from Government Departments, the Government Statistician of New South Wales has prepared an index of employment and unemployment covering all persons dependent on employment in New South Wales. The Director of the Bureau of Industry of Queensland has published for two years past an index of employment and unemployment among men wage and salary earners. The data for this index is derived from that relating to Unemployment Insurance contributions and other sources. The results are given below -

/NEW SOUTH WALES

NEW SOUTH WALES.

Percentages of Employment and Unemployment - All available wage-earners -
 (A) Including and (B) excluding the full-time equivalent of men engaged
 part-time on relief works)

Month	Percentage of all who are dependent on and available for employment			
	(A) Including full time equivalent of part-time relief workers		(B) Excluding full time equivalent of part-time relief workers	
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed
Census of 30th June, 1933	74.4	25.6	73.5	26.5
1934 - June	81.1	18.9	78.0	22.0
1935 - June	86.6	13.4	83.7	16.3
July	87.2	12.8	84.3	15.7
August	88.0	12.0	85.1	14.9
September	89.2	10.8	86.5	13.5
October	89.6	10.4	87.0	13.0
November	90.3	9.7	87.8	12.2

The indexes have been adjusted to allow for an estimated increase of 1.2 per cent. per annum in the number of persons dependent on employment. At the Census of 30th June, 1933, 15,142 persons dependent on employment returned themselves as unemployed by reason of illness, accident, etc., or "voluntarily". This number, representing 1.8 per cent. of all persons dependent on employment, is excluded from the above indexes, which relate to percentages of available wage-earners employed and unemployed.

QUEENSLAND.

Employment and Unemployment among Men Wage and Salary Earners. (In terms of full-time employment and unemployment)

Period	Percentage		Approximate Number	
	Employed	Unemployed	Employed	Unemployed
Average 1929	89.9	10.1	148,340	16,660
" 1930	86.4	13.6	144,630	22,850
" 1931	77.2	22.8	131,270	38,730
" 1932	77.8	22.2	134,130	38,320
" 1933	79.8	20.2	139,720	35,310
" 1934	84.9	15.1	150,870	26,800
3 months ended -				
June, 1934	85.0	15.0	150,910	26,640
December, "	89.3	10.7	159,750	19,130
March, 1935	87.2	12.8	156,600	22,940
June, "	89.9	10.1	162,040	18,170
September, " Ø	90.1	9.9	163,140	17,970

Ø The full-time equivalent of relief work (included as employment) was approximately 4,650 men. Without this work the percentage unemployed would have been 14.7.

The percentages and numbers employed and unemployed have been adjusted for increase in men dependent on employment, and for seasonal variations in employment.

BUILDING PERMITS.

A further index of the relative activity in industry is furnished by Building permits issued, and the estimated amount to be spent on the proposed buildings and repairs.

/The following

The following tables give details of the value of Building Permits issued in the Six Capital Cities and Suburbs of the Commonwealth for the periods shown.

Year		New Dwellings	Other New Buildings	Alterations and Additions	Total Value All Building Operations
		£	£	£	£
1928-29 (a)	..	17,455,449	4,902,928	(b) 1,932,887	24,291,264
1929-30 (a)	..	11,057,069	3,098,700	(b) 1,741,291	15,897,060
1930-31 (a)	..	1,989,167	1,547,005	(b) 799,245	4,335,417
1931-32	..	1,533,325	1,848,257	1,225,680	4,607,262
1932-33	..	3,185,679	1,503,877	2,161,846	6,851,402
1933-34	..	6,105,369	2,194,162	2,885,378	11,184,909
1934-35	..	9,606,533	3,829,676	4,173,041	17,610,590
Quarter ending -					
December, 1934	..	2,030,257	945,822	890,870	3,866,949
March, 1935	..	2,436,466	942,604	1,110,558	4,489,628
June, "	..	2,936,510	1,271,694	1,180,786	5,388,990
September "	..	3,428,704	1,275,712	1,088,729	5,793,145

(a) Exclusive of City of Sydney; (b) Exclusive of Sydney and Suburbs.

BUILDING PERMITS IN CAPITAL CITIES AND SUBURBS OF EACH STATE.

Period	Sydney and Suburbs	Melbourne and Suburbs	Brisbane and Suburbs	Adelaide and Suburbs	Perth and Suburbs	Hobart and Suburbs	TOTAL
	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000	£1000
1928-29	..	(a) 9,715	7,661	2,440	1,807	2,518	150
1929-30	..	(a) 5,810	5,576	1,414	1,158	1,833	106
1930-31	..	(a) 1,005	1,434	1,098	314	393	91
1931-32	..	995	1,861	876	217	596	62
1932-33	..	2,257	2,568	793	400	732	101
1933-34	..	4,142	4,218	1,051	617	988	169
1934-35	..	7,632	5,604	1,654	1,164	1,354	203
December Quarter							
1934	..	1,671	1,004	408	373	356	55
March Quarter							
1935	..	2,071	1,361	335	333	346	43
June Quarter							
1935	..	2,388	1,766	521	306	337	71
September							
Quarter 1935		2,528	1,788	574	304	505	94

(a) Exclusive of City of Sydney and value of alterations and additions in Sydney and Suburbs.

II. UNEMPLOYMENT, 4th Quarter, 1935.

The figures relating to unemployment among members of Trade Unions are similar to those published quarterly in the past, and are derived from returns furnished by Trade Unions.

The number of trade unionists represented in the returns, from which the following figures have been derived, is normally about half the total. Generally, it may be said that the returns of unemployment include little information about rural employment, so that the percentage results given herein do not vary greatly with the season, though the food preserving industries have some effect in this connection. The total unemployment in the country, however, may be affected a good deal by the crop seasons.

The percentages of unemployment among members of reporting Trade Unions for Australia as a whole for each quarter from the 2nd Quarter of 1932, when unemployment was at its maximum, to the 4th Quarter of 1935, are as follows:-

/AUSTRALIA.

AUSTRALIA.

1932 -	2nd Quarter	..	30.0 per cent.
	3rd "	..	29.6 " "
	4th "	..	28.1 " "
1933 -	1st "	..	26.5 " "
	2nd "	..	25.7 " "
	3rd "	..	25.1 " "
	4th "	..	23.0 " "
1934 -	1st "	..	21.9 " "
	2nd "	..	20.9 " "
	3rd "	..	20.4 " "
	4th "	..	18.8 " "
1935 -	1st "	..	18.6 " "
	2nd "	..	17.8 " "
	3rd "	..	15.9 " "
	4th "	..	13.7 " "

It should be noted that the figures refer to the mid-month of each quarter, and represent the conditions at the middle of that month. Consequently, the latest figures referred to herein relate to the middle of November, 1935.

The percentages given above show a continuous decline from the peak point (30.0%) in unemployment attained in the 2nd Quarter of 1932, after an almost continuous rise since 1929, when the rate was 9.3 per cent. After remaining fairly constant at 28.0 per cent. to 28.3 per cent. for three quarters - from August, 1931, to February, 1932 - the maximum point was reached in May, 1932, when the proportion of unemployment in the reporting Trade Unions was 30 per cent. of the membership.

From the apex, the proportion of unemployed decreased by 4 per thousand in the third quarter of 1932, and in the two quarters following, the improvement was much more marked, amounting to 15 per 1,000 in the fourth quarter of 1932, and 16 per 1,000 in the first quarter of 1933. The improvement continued until unemployment stood at 13.7 per cent. for November, 1935. This is the lowest percentage of unemployment since November, 1929, when it was 13.1 per cent., and the improvement for the quarter is the greatest recorded for any similar period since the tide of unemployment turned in 1932. Since the maximum point in May, 1932, the rate of unemployment has diminished by 16.3 per cent., or 163 per 1,000 members, i.e., from 30.0 in May, 1932, to 13.7 per cent. in November, 1935.

This improvement since the 2nd Quarter of 1932 has been experienced in all the States in the following order (per 1,000 members):- South Australia, 205; Western Australia, 185; Victoria, 164; New South Wales, 162; Tasmania, 137; Queensland, 122. The more recent improvement during the 4th Quarter, 1935, over the previous quarter was shared by all the States in the following order, per 1,000 members:- Victoria, 35; Tasmania, 30; New South Wales, 21, South Australia, 16; Queensland, 8; Western Australia, 7.

The usual tables for Trade Union Unemployment are appended.

AUSTRALIA - Number and Membership of Trade Unions Reporting, and
Number and Percentage of Unemployed - 1st Quarter, 1929, to 4th Quarter, 1935.

AUSTRALIA	1st Quarter 1929	2nd Quarter 1932	2nd Quarter 1933	2nd Quarter 1934	4th Quarter 1934	2nd Quarter 1935	3rd Quarter 1935	4th Quarter 1935
Number of Unions	375	396	394	394	396	397	395	395
Membership ..	420,756	413,742	415,559	422,113	426,866	433,254	438,216	439,165
Unemployed -								
Number ..	39,159	124,068	106,652	88,413	80,097	77,177	69,575	59,992
Percentage ..	9.3	30.0	25.7	20.9	18.8	17.8	15.9	13.7

/STATES

STATES - Percentage of Members of Trade Unions returned as Unemployed in each State - 1st Quarter, 1929, to 4th Quarter, 1935.

STATE	1st Quarter 1929	2nd Quarter 1932	2nd Quarter 1933	2nd Quarter 1934	4th Quarter 1934	2nd Quarter 1935	3rd Quarter 1935	4th Quarter 1935
New South Wales ..	9.7	33.2	29.6	25.0	23.5	22.7	19.1	17.0
Victoria ..	8.6	27.7	23.0	18.0	15.3	15.0	14.8	11.3
Queensland ..	7.1	19.9	15.6	12.7	9.1	8.8	8.5	7.7
South Australia ..	13.2	35.2	30.0	25.4	23.0	18.9	16.3	14.7
Western Australia ..	8.5	30.3	26.0	18.3	16.3	13.9	12.5	11.8
Tasmania ..	8.7	27.4	19.0	17.9	17.0	16.4	16.7	13.7
TOTAL:	9.3	30.0	25.7	20.9	18.8	17.8	15.9	13.7

The above returns are compiled and published substantially on the basis that has been adopted in regard to Trade Union returns since 1911. It is to be noted, however, that the returns relate to members of trade unions embracing only about 20 per cent. of wage-earners, and that for some States these constitute a more representative sample of employment than for others. The percentages include persons unemployed from all causes, other than those unemployed directly as a result of industrial disputes. They may be interpreted as relating to the percentages of the members of unions making returns who are not, according to the records or knowledge of the union Secretary, employed within union callings.

The percentages may not exactly represent the proportion of total unemployment in Australia as a whole, though Census data and other records indicate that they give a picture of the development of the unemployment crisis in Australia, and of the recovery therefrom which is not at present available from any other source.

In view of the very definite nature of the information on which the indexes of employment and unemployment for New South Wales and those relating to men for Queensland are based, these indexes should be the most accurate record available of unemployment in those States.

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